



NEWS

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GOVERNOR TO HONOR NINE CHP OFFICERS FOR BRAVERY

(Sacramento) Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on Tuesday will recognize nine California Highway Patrol (CHP) officers with the Medal of Valor for performing extraordinary acts of heroism. The Governor's Medal of Valor is the highest honor a state can bestow on its employees.

"All these officers took the same oath, promising to assist those in peril or distress, and if necessary, lay down their life rather than swerve from the path of duty," said CHP Commissioner Mike Brown. "It is without a doubt, their courage and quick thinking led to many lives being saved."

The following officers are receiving a Gold Medal of Valor:

Officer Brent Weese, while on-duty, July 3, 2006, rescued the victim of a vehicle collision which overturned off the roadway, down a steep embankment, and burst into flames. The vehicle fire ignited the dry grass and shrubs in the canyon making escape of the asthmatic victim nearly impossible. Officer Weese made his way down the steep embankment to the victim and assisted the injured and frightened driver up a steep canyon wall away from the fire. Officer Weese is credited with saving the life of Rebecca Malamma.

Officer Brian Bushey, while on-duty, November 3, 2006, provided comfort and aid to the trapped victim of a vehicle which had slid off the road and overturned onto its side in a near freezing creek. Officer Bushey crawled into the precariously perched vehicle and stood in waist deep icy water for nearly 45 minutes to assist the trapped driver, keeping her head above water while the fire department extricated her. Officer Bushey is credited with saving Leticia Hansen's life.

Officer Brian Elledge, while on-duty, December 2, 2006, pulled from a flaming vehicle the delirious victim of a collision. Officer Elledge and his partner encountered a vehicle collision with the driver trapped inside. Officer Elledge was forced to break the driver side window and lean into the smoke-filled car to pull the confused driver out before being seriously burned. During the extrication of the driver Officer Elledge's jacket caught on fire. Roberto Montoya would have certainly been seriously injured or killed if not for Officer Elledge's efforts.

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Sergeant Erik Quisenberry, while off-duty, April 12, 2005, was instrumental in rescuing a Costco employee from a knife-wielding thief. While shopping at Costco, Sergeant Quisenberry heard an unusual sound coming from the offices at the front of the store. Upon investigating he encountered a man threatening a female employee at knifepoint. Sergeant Quisenberry took control of the suspect's hand holding the knife and, after removing the knife from the subject's hand and with the aid of two Costco employees, forced him to the floor and held him until police arrived. Sergeant Quisenberry's quick response helped save Jessica Rikkelman's life.

Officer Jude Donahue, while on-duty, August 26, 2006, courageously attempted to rescue the occupant of a burning motor home. Officer Donahue encountered a motor home which was on fire and, with the aid of two Los Angeles Police officers, entered the smoke filled vehicle and located the occupant. His first attempt was cut short by the intense flames, forcing Officer Donahue to retreat. He entered the motor home a second time and tried again to remove the victim from the burning, smoking vehicle. Due to the intense heat and thick smoke Officer Donahue was forced out of the motor home without the occupant. Officer Donahue's efforts to rescue Ewell Washington, although unsuccessful, were heroic.

Officers Peter Sutherland, Timothy Hall, and Duane Greaver, while on-duty, June 8, 2005, combined their efforts to extricate a stubborn subject from a burning vehicle. Officer Hall initially attempted to stop the driver of the vehicle for unsafe driving. The driver failed to yield and was involved in a collision which eventually rendered the vehicle inoperable. After the vehicle stopped Officers Greaver and Sutherland arrived to aid Officer Hall. While instructing the driver to exit the vehicle it ignited in flames forcing the three officers to approach the burning vehicle and pull the combative driver out. Officers Greaver, Hall, and Sutherland risked their own safety and successfully rescued David Kwan from his burning vehicle.

Officer Corben Whitney, while off-duty, July 13, 2007, rescued three passengers from a burning vehicle. After witnessing the crash which caused the van to immediately burst into flames, Officer Whitney quickly removed an adult and adolescent passenger from the vehicle. He then heard the cries of an additional passenger. Upon returning to the van, he located a 4-year-old boy fastened in a car seat in the rear of the vehicle with flames all around him. Officer Whitney reached through the flames and grabbed the boy's shirt which ripped away; he then grabbed the boy's leg and tried to pull him free. Officer Whitney was forced away from the van by the heat and smoke. On his final effort he grabbed the boy's leg with both hands and pulled until the straps on the seat gave way allowing Officer Whitney to pull the severely burned child from the vehicle. As a result of Officer Whitney's brave determination, young Edgar Flores survived the incident.

For additional information or to arrange interviews contact the Office of Media Relations at (916) 657-7202.

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